

Duties

The incumbent serves as a Plant Protection and Quarantine Officer at a port and/or domestic work site with the responsibility for enforcing Plant Protection and Quarantine regulations. More specifically the incumbent:

- Inspects ships, aircraft, vehicles, passengers, railway cars, mail baggage, plants, plant products, and miscellaneous articles, (following standard PPQ procedures) for restricted or prohibited agricultural commodities, animal by-products, and pests that may be dangerous to the nation's agriculture.

- Reviews manifests, incoming PPQ forms, consular invoices and other documents associated with the import of products, noting agricultural commodities on an inspection report based on the country of origin, type of commodity, pest risk, etc. Selects material for inspection according to established sampling plan. Using field techniques, recognized the presence and/or symptoms of plant pests. Distinguishes between domestic and cosmopolitan pests and those that are potentially dangerous to the agricultural industry. From the results of inspections, makes decisions as to the subsequent action, such as; (1) release of non-prohibited products and materials, (2) determines the need for pre-entry treatments, and (3) refuses entry, movement and/or seize, destroy, or safeguard prohibited, restrictive, and infested materials pending final disposition.

- Contacts landowners, farmers, nurserymen, warehousemen, trade representatives, brokers, etc., relative to securing permission to conduct surveys, enforce quarantine regulations, and advise on PPQ programs and regulations.

- Coordinates and conducts surveys and inspection to determine the presence and density of plant pests and other environmental physical, biological, and ecological factors that may affect the injurious nature of plant pests.

- Interprets and enforces Federal and parallel State domestic quarantines and regulatory orders restricting the shipment of plants, plant products, animal by-products, and other materials, into, within, and out of the United States. Upon compliance with regulations issues certificates or permits the movement of regulated articles. Prepares and executes compliance agreements with cooperators, catering devices, establishments, etc. Review and revises cooperative agreements as conditions warrant.

- Plans, conducts, and/or supervises various treatment such as disinfection, sterilization, fumigation, etc., of plant pests. Determines and ensures the proper dosage, time of exposure, temperature, and safety conditions are met to avoid damage to the products. Determines the appropriate measures to use to eradicate the pests. Decides when re-inspection of infested sites

shall be made to determine the incidence or density of plant pests and the effect of control operations.

-May coordinate the activities of lower-graded seasonal, temporary, or full-time personnel assigned to assist in the work. This may include routine assigning and scheduling of daily work, evaluating work performed, instructing employees in specific tasks and job techniques giving on-the job training to new employees, and reporting to the supervisor the status or work assigned.

-May perform in a temporary duty capacity duties similar to those described above in connection with Emergency Program operations.

-May coordinate activities with U.S. Customs and Immigration officials, providing assistance to them as appropriate and required.

FACTOR 1

Knowledge Required by the Positions Primary L 1-6 950 pts.

Knowledge of biological and agricultural science and of Plant Protection and Quarantine programs, activities, and regulations sufficient to: (1) independently apply established methods and procedures in the performance survey, control, and regulatory work; and (2) generally recognize plant pests of economic significance.

Knowledge of farming operations, crops, and characteristics of parasitic plant pests (including insects and other plants) sufficient to effectively plan and oversee a control program in a designated geographical area.

Knowledge of substances such as fumigants, herbicides, and pesticides and the equipment associated with these substances sufficient to use them safely and effectively in plant protection and quarantine activities.

Knowledge of various treatment methods such as refrigeration, vapor heat, and dry heat sufficient to independently use these methods, or to evaluate the effectiveness of the application of such methods in carrying out treatment and control activities.

Knowledge of the transportation and shipping industry's practices, procedures and carrier modes sufficient to enforce quarantines governing movement of injurious plant pests, diseases, and animal by-products and to inspect various conveyances.

FACTOR 2

Supervisory Controls Primary L 2-3 275 pts.

The supervisor assigns the officer to a particular designated work area or project and provides special instructions on changes in policies or procedures.

The officer works relatively independent in carrying out assigned duties and responsibilities. Actions and decisions are generally made within the time frame work of applicable guides and precedent. Considerable independent judgment is exercised in the case of an adverse decision which would result in a large unexpected expense or loss. Potentially controversial decisions as referred to the supervisor for concurrence.

Work is reviewed through formal or informal reports, discussions of actions taken, or through occasional observation of actual work performance. The work is reviewed adequacy of results and adherence to established policies and procedures.

FACTOR 3

Guidelines

Primary L 2-3 275 pts.

Guides include agency regulations, directives, manuals, treatment instructions, and other administrative guidelines.

The guides do not cover all problems, situations, or circumstances encountered. The Officer must use experience and judgement in applying the guides when taking the necessary actions to prevent the introduction of plant pests or solving problems in surveying or regulatory work.

FACTOR 4

Complexity

Primary L 4-3 150 pts.

Assignments involve the inspection of cargo, baggage, railway cars, aircraft, ships, plants, plant material, animal by-products and planning and conducting pest detection surveys to enforce regulations governing the movement of plant pests and field operation designed to control, suppress, or eradicate plant pests.

For inspection assignments the officer considers such factors as the country of origin, the types of pest normally associated with a commodity, and the destination of the material and its end use. In planning various survey and regulatory operations, the officer considers such factors as resources available, degree of infestation, changing patterns of infestation, hazard of spread, and crops.

Actions are generally made within the framework applicable guides and precedents. Problems are usually traditional in nature and complex situations are referred to the supervisor for solutions.

FACTOR 5

Scope and Effect

Primary L 5-3 150 pts.

The purpose of the work is to enforce regulations in accordance with established criteria, various regulations which govern the movement of prohibited, restricted, and unrestricted plants, plant material, and animal by-products and which are designed to prevent the spread of foreign pests and diseases.

The work contributes to the health and marketability of agricultural and animal resources and the public's understanding of the need for, and voluntary compliance with, agricultural and other quarantines. Additionally, farmers, ranchers, and their members of the public are protected against the effects of destructive insects, diseases, and weeds.

FACTOR 6

Personal Contacts

Primary L 6-3 60 pts.

Personal contacts are with business and personal travelers, including persons of various nationalities, socio-economic groups, and professional level; e.g., diplomats, clerks non-residents with no English-speaking capability, prominent people who are used to deferential treatment, salesman, officers of Federal and State enforcement agencies, importers and exporters, nursery personnel, contractors, employees of transportation and shipping companies, including moderately unstructured and take place in diverse places such as a ship's engine room, store room, or bridge, onboard aircraft, at international borders, and in warehouses.

FACTOR 7

Purpose of Contacts

Primary L 7-2 50 pts.

The contacts are established to enforce regulations; to explain methods, procedures, and objectives of the Plant Protection and Quarantine Programs; to obtain voluntary cooperation of the interested parties; and to search for and locate plant pests. Usually, the people with whom the officer deals are cooperative (or at least neutral in their attitude); however, the officer occasionally is called upon to use tact and persuasion to overcome the resistance of persons who are reluctant to cooperate for various reasons, e.g., fear of property confiscation, situations that develop because of misunderstanding due to personality conflicts.

FACTOR 8

Physical Demands

Primary L 50 pts.

The work requires physical exertion such as: long periods of standing at passenger inspection counters or sitting for long periods to perform microscopic examinations; recurring crouching, stopping and reaching while inspecting cargo, automobiles, vessels or other conveyances; occasional climbing and descending ladders on vessels; long periods of walking, carrying equipment weighing up to 50 pounds; occasional handling of loads 55 gallon drums, fumigation tarps, farm implements and equipment, gas cylinders, bags of chemicals or other materials; long periods of driving in rural and/or metropolitan areas; occasional riding in all-terrain vehicles in rough terrain and flying in small observation aircraft; work schedules may require more than 40 hours per week.

FACTOR 9

Work Environment

Primary L 9-2 20 pts.

The work environment includes farms, railroad yards, aircraft cargo areas and marine docks. Periods of outdoor work may be required in snow, rain, or extreme heat. Occasional periods of outdoor work may be required in remote areas with no modern comfort facilities. The work involves the use of toxic chemicals, pesticides and fumigants. Protective clothing may be required such as hard hats, gloves, goggles, masks or self-contained breathing apparatus.